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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
14 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 37
(As of 2230 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. A major battle for the Sinai passes occurred today. Both sides admit that fighting was heavy, but it does not appear that the Egyptians registered any significant gains. Israeli air activity may already have been shifted from the Syrian front to the Sinai.

2. On the Syrian front, the Israelis have apparently taken Sasa, and small units may have advanced beyond the town. The Syrians are occupying heavily fortified positions which have been prepared over the past several years for the defense of Damascus.

EGYPTIAN FRONT

3. A major battle for the Sinai apparently occurred today. Reports from both sides--although not necessarily valid indicators of gains or losses--have reflected a major battle in the area between the Egyptian positions along the canal and the Sinai passes. The Israelis claim to have destroyed 280 Egyptian tanks, while losing 30-40 of their own. The Egyptians admit losing 100 tanks, but say that 150 Israeli tanks were destroyed. The situation apparently is quiet tonight.

4. The Egyptians launched the attack toward the passes this morning. The Israelis claim that the Egyptians have

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been held to maximum gains of only ten kilometers, despite the massive attack. The Egyptians do not appear to have registered any significant successes, at least in terms of objectives, during the fighting today.

5. The Israeli Air Force apparently shifted some of its operations from the Syrian front to the Sinai this morning to counter the Egyptian attack. An official in Tel Aviv said that Israeli aircraft had attacked Egyptian surface-to-air missile batteries on both sides of the canal. This suggests that the Egyptians have moved mobile SA-6 launchers to the east bank, probably to provide cover to troops advancing into the Sinai in today's attack.

THE SYRIAN FRONT

6. Only scattered clashes were reported on the Syrian front this evening, and no significant progress was made by either side. Israeli forces have halted in the outskirts of Sasa, about 32 kilometers away from Damascus, where they are reported to be under heavy and accurate long-range artillery fire. Syrian forces adjacent to the advancing Israelis have shown no panic, according to UNTSO sources, and have been directing artillery fire into the right flank of the Israeli forces. These same sources also indicate that some Israeli units have advanced about 8 kilometers further down the road to a point about 24 kilometers from Damascus.

7. The front from the Damascus-Qunaytirah road south to the Jordanian border continues to approximate the 1967 cease-fire line. A second Israeli attempt in two days to fill in an anti-tank ditch in preparation for an attack across the line--just south of Qunaytirah--was repulsed by Syrian artillery.

8. The Arabs also continue to hold a salient west of the cease-fire line along the slopes of Mount Hermon. It is not known whether the troops are Syrian or Moroccan. They are reported to be armed with nothing heavier than machine guns.

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9. In an announcement this evening, Israeli Defense Minister Dayan said that the Syrian Army--although not annihilated--was badly beaten and defeated, and Israel could now swing the main weight of its armor and air force to the Suez Front.

10. Syria's Information Minister insisted, on the other hand, that the fighting situation was "good," and warned that Damascus would be turned into a graveyard for the Israelis if they tried to conquer it.

11. The Israelis report this evening that Iraqis are being brought up to the front lines to replace Syrian troops which are drawing back to a heavily fortified line in defense of Damascus. The line consists of obstacles and bunkers built over the past six years by the Syrians under Soviet supervision.

12. The Jordanian 40th armored brigade today moved from a position east of Dar'a to an area west of Shaykh Miskin and south of Nawa. Although this shift brought the force substantially closer to the Israeli-Syrian fighting, the brigade encountered no resistance or air strikes. Two Israeli aircraft overflew the Jordanians, but--according to officials in Amman--were driven off by Syrian antiaircraft missiles.

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EGYPT

15. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry instructed all ambassadors today--with the possible exception of diplomatic representatives in Washington and New York--to arrange to have Arab sympathizers demonstrate in front of US embassies, protesting the US position on the Middle Eastern situation. Cairo warned the posts "not to resort to violence or any acts that might be exploited to damage our cause. These demonstrations are to be well planned so as to present the desired impression and force."

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ISRAEL

18. The latest estimate of the financial costs of the war to Israel is about \$2 billion (this includes lost civilian production), according to Finance Minister Sapir. This ballpark figure is approximately one third of the

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[REDACTED]

annual budget. The government's plans to finance the war are beginning to take shape and the heavy costs of war are being hammered home. A new compulsory loan, which will be collected from personal incomes, has been instituted, and a voluntary war bond drive is under way. Abroad, fund raising quotas for all countries have been increased. Israel bond sales in the US and Canada are said to have exceeded \$150 million during the war's first week.

FRANCE-LIBYA

19. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] This follows an Israeli protest to France against the Arabs' use of French-supplied aircraft to attack Israeli positions in the Sinai. An Israeli military spokesman said tonight that two Mirages had been shot down on the Sinai front on 14 October and "presumably" were part of a consignment transferred by Libya to Egypt.

JORDAN-UNITED KINGDOM

20. The UK ambassador in Amman informed the Government of Jordan today that because Jordan was now involved in the war, the UK embargo on furnishing arms to any belligerent nation applied to Jordan. The UK envoy informed Jordan that an Israeli request for ammunition and jet fuel had also been turned down.

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